

For the President, All in a Day's Work

Time Needed: One Class Period

Materials Needed:

Student worksheets

Copy Instructions:

Student packet (*4 pages double-sided; class set*)

Learning Objectives. Students will be able to:

- Analyze the difficult decisions the President must make by ranking a list of presidential responsibilities from most difficult to easiest.
- Identify the powers of the Executive Branch by reading a selection from the U.S. Constitution.
- Match presidential responsibilities with the specific Executive Branch powers listed in the Constitution.
- Identify the federal agencies that handle a list of specific issues by matching the agencies with the issues.

STEP BY STEP

- 1) ANTICIPATE** by asking students to think of one thing they think the President does in his job as President. Give students a moment to think, then randomly call on students to share what they thought of.
- 2) DISTRIBUTE** one "All in a Day's Work" packet to each student.
- 3) READ** the directions on the first page, "All in a Day's Work," with the class.
- 4) ASK** students to complete Groups A, B, and C on the "All in a Day's Work" page. When they have finished, discuss each group of three tasks with the class. (Tasks are grouped in threes to make the ranking and discussion more manageable.)
- 5) READ** "Play by the Rules," with the class. Explain that this is the actual text of the Constitution. The President's powers are underlined to make them easier to spot. Discuss them as you read.
- 6) READ** the directions for "I've Got the Power" with the class. This matching exercise will help them link the tasks they ranked on the first page with the powers they read about in the Constitution excerpt on the second page.
- 7) ASK** students to complete the "I've Got the Power" matching activity.
- 8) REVIEW** the answers to the matching activity.
- 9) READ** the introduction to "So Many Laws, So Little Time!" with the class.
- 10) ASK** students to complete the "So Many Laws, So Little Time!" word bank activity.
- 11) REVIEW** the answers to the word bank activity.
- 12) COLLECT** the packets.
- 13) CLOSE** by asking students to silently recall one power the President has. Call on students until all 10 powers discussed in the lesson have been named.

I'VE GOT THE POWER!



Name: **** Teacher Key ****



One column below has a list of the President's responsibilities. The other column has a list of powers the Constitution gives to the President.

Match each responsibility with the correct Constitutional power.

The President's Responsibilities

- 1) D Lead weekly meetings where I ask the leaders of the government offices (called "agencies") for their advice on how to handle the country's most difficult problems.
- 2) I Give my yearly "State of the Union" speech on what's happening in the U.S.
- 3) J Decide whether to approve or reject a bill that I believe would help millions of people, but costs a lot of money.
- 4) B Follow the Constitution and the law even if I disagree with it.
- 5) C Decide whether to send more troops into war knowing that some will die, but it will keep the country safe.
- 6) A Make sure the IRS (the government agency that collects taxes) collects people's taxes correctly, so the government has money to do its job.
- 7) H Hold a press conference where I ask Congress to do more.
- 8) E Decide whether to let someone go from jail because there is new evidence the trial was unfair, even though I don't know if the person is guilty of the crime.
- 9) F Try to negotiate an agreement with another country that would reduce both countries' nuclear weapons.
- 10) G Choose a new Supreme Court justice because someone on the Court is retiring.

Presidential Powers Listed in the Constitution:

- A. Power to carry out the laws
- B. Must live by the Constitution
- C. Commander in Chief of the military
- D. Ask his advisors, who lead parts of the government, for their opinion on different issues
- E. Can pardon someone for a crime, which gets them out of jail or stops the death penalty
- F. Can make treaties with other countries (with Senate approval)
- G. Can choose new Supreme Court justices (with Senate approval)
- H. Make recommendations to Congress about what bills to work on
- I. Update Congress on how things are going in the country
- J. Sign (approve) or veto (reject) bills from Congress

SO MANY LAWS, SO LITTLE TIME!

Name: **** Teacher Key ****

The President is in charge of carrying out thousands of laws! How does he do it? With lots of help! The Executive Branch is made up of many agencies (organizations). Each agency is responsible for carrying out a different kind of law.

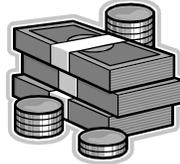
The sentences below describe 8 government agencies. **Use the word and picture bank to help you figure out the official name for each agency. Write the correct words in the blank spaces.**



Justice



Education



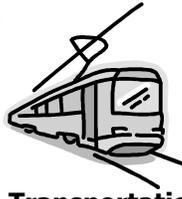
Treasury



Defense



Health and Human Services



Transportation



Agriculture



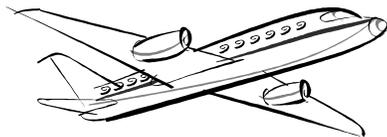
Homeland Security

1. The Department of **Homeland Security** works to protect the country against terrorism and make sure the borders are safe.
2. The Department of **Treasury** makes the money, tries to help the economy, and collects taxes.
3. The Department of **Defense** includes all parts of the U.S. military, like the Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force, and its mission is to protect the United States across the world.
4. The Department of **Justice** tries to enforce federal laws, prevent crime, and punish those convicted of crimes.
5. The Department of **Agriculture** supports farmers, makes sure our food is safe, and gives recommendations about good nutrition.
6. The Department of **Health and Human Services** provides health insurance such as Medicare, tries to keep people healthy from things like the flu, and supports finding cures for diseases.
7. The Department of **Transportation** is responsible for federal highways, the railroads, and drivers' safety.
8. The Department of **Education** provides funding to public schools and helps students pay for college.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Name: _____

Imagine you have been elected President of the United States. What do you think would be the best part of the job? Having your own personal jet? Living in the White House? Have a bowling alley in your house? (Yes, there's a one lane bowling alley in the basement of the White House!)

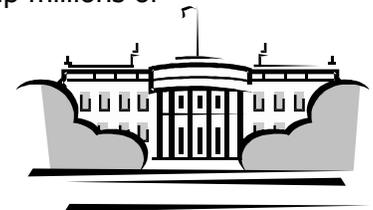


Being president is not just fun and games. You have real responsibilities. Below is a list of things you would do as president of the United States. Which do you think would be the hardest to do? Which do you think would be the easiest?

Rank the tasks in each group from 1 (hardest) to 3 (easiest). There is no correct answer! Use your own judgment.

Group A

- ___ Lead weekly meetings where I ask the leaders of the government offices (called "agencies") for their advice on how to handle the country's most difficult problems.
- ___ Give my yearly "State of the Union" speech on what's happening in the U.S., which is broadcast live on television.
- ___ Decide whether to approve or reject a bill that I believe would help millions of people, but costs a lot of money.



Group B

- ___ Follow the Constitution and the law even if I disagree with it.
- ___ Decide whether to send more troops into war knowing that some will die, but it will keep the country safe.
- ___ Make sure the IRS (the government agency that collects taxes) collects people's taxes correctly, so the government has money to do its job.

Group C

- ___ Answer difficult questions from reporters at a press conference where I'm asking Congress to do more.
- ___ Try to negotiate an agreement with another country that would reduce both countries' nuclear weapons.
- ___ Choose a new Supreme Court justice because someone on the Court is retiring.

PLAY BY THE RULES

Name: _____

Okay, now you have a sense of what kinds of things the President does. But where does the President get the power to do all those things?

Here's a hint: Look in the rule book. Yes, that's right—The Constitution!



from Article 2 of the United States Constitution

Section. 1.

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. . . .

. . .

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:--"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section. 2.

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States . . .

. . .

Section. 3.

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; . . . he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

. . .

from Article 1, Section 7 of the United States Constitution

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States: If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it . . .

I'VE GOT THE POWER!



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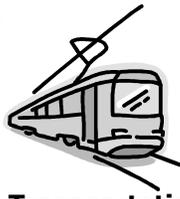
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5. The Department of _____ supports farmers, makes sure our food is safe, and gives recommendations about good nutrition.
6. The Department of _____ provides health insurance such as Medicare, tries to keep people healthy from things like the flu, and supports finding cures for diseases.
7. The Department of _____ is responsible for federal highways, the railroads, and drivers' safety.
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